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# A CANNIBAL QUEEN WHO WANTS TO JOIN THE UNITED STATES.

## Queen Mamea, the Dusky Sovereign of the Society Islands in the South Pacific Wants Her Kingdom Admitted as a New State.

The craze for annexation to the United States has at last reached the cannibal islands of the Pacific Ocean.

Queen Mamea, the dusky ruler of the Society Islands, has sent word to this Government that she desires to have her kingdom admitted to the Union as a new State. Her Royal Highness and her barbarian subjects are anxious to become American citizens, and will bring along with them a fine collection of idols, war gods and cannibalistic religious rituals.

Queen Mamea and her warriors are just now hiding in the interior of their island home, French gunboats have shelled the native villages along the shore, but are unable to subdue the islanders. This is the second time the French have bombarded the Society Islands, and Queen Mamea is getting tired of it.

No official document from her Royal Highness has yet been sent to the Department of State at Washington. In fact, Queen Mamea doesn't read or write, and her Prime Minister is also unable to conduct diplomatic correspondence beyond the reach of his own voice. Her Majesty has, however, entrusted her negotiations to an American sea captain.

These cannibals hate the French, who control the adjoining island of Tahiti, and they say they love the Americans. They have loved some American missionaries in times past in their own peculiar way, but now say they have given up cannibalism and reformed.

Queen Mamea's kingdom includes the islands of Raiatea and Huahine, whose soil is rich and productive. There is on these islands a large population of sleek-bodied, light-complexioned natives, who spend most of their time asleep and at play, and do very little work.

Raiatea is thirty miles north of Tahiti. Being thus in close proximity to the French possessions, it would seem an easy matter for the latter to capture the Queen and extend the benefits of French civilization to her subjects. The French, however, have tried this once before and failed.

**ATTACKED BY GUNBOATS.**  
During the year 1890 French gunboats bombarded Raiatea and they drove Queen Mamea into the canyons. Then they kept the Queen and her warlike followers under siege for several months.

Finally the French had to retire. The natives, with their gallant Queen, had on the hills provisions enough to last for several years. Bread fruit trees, moreover, were producing fresh leaves for them right along.

All of this discouraged the French troops, whose provisions were rapidly running out. The gunboats wasted large quantities of ammunition firing into the beach, which the natives had long since abandoned.

This time, however, the French hope to be more successful. The barkentine Tropic Bird arrived at San Francisco a few days ago, bringing the latest news about the funny war that has broken out again between the French and this dusky Queen of the Society Islands.

The Captain of the Tropic Bird told how Mamea had again defied the French, when

Queen Mamea insisted that she did not want to fall into the hands of the British. She expressed great admiration for the United States, and begged the captain of the Tropic Bird to present her case to the American people and stir up a sentiment for annexation. As to what was to be done with her throne and royal prerogatives if the Society Islands became a new State in the Union, the Queen did not discuss.

The Queen then took to the woods. This was only a few weeks ago. She retired to the hills with all of her followers.

The French gunboats hurried from Tahiti and began to shell the native villages along the beach of Raiatea and Huahine. A native village in a South Sea island is worth about \$18, and can be built in a few days. The loss of their houses is no hardship to the people of the Society Islands.

This name, by the way, is somewhat misleading. The society there, according to the accounts of voracious mariners, who have lived long among these people, is nothing extra.

While the aristocracy and even the Sovereign are of a social disposition, and will take a drink with almost anybody who opens a bottle, yet society, as such, does not exist upon any elaborate scale of organization. The Society Islanders are not society people.

There is no such thing as getting into or out of society, except in the case of people who are eaten, and these get right into "the midst" of the local 400 in a way not to be equalled here. The islanders derive their peculiar name from the Royal Society, which in 1769 sent an expedition there under Captain Cook for the purpose of observing the transit of Venus. It is said that the astronomers in several cases had a narrow escape from being eaten by the natives.

Just now, however, the natives are living on bread fruit and other palatable articles which a generous climate yields in abundance without the necessity of their

not have to be distilled or stored to gather age. This drink is called kava.

It is obtained by tapping a plant, and the Society Islanders indulge in frugal orgies lasting several days by drinking this stuff on special idolatrous feasts and during a war. It is suspected that a large number of them are now intoxicated in the mountains.

**THE QUEEN'S FLIGHT.**

The enemy has now blown up every one of the Queen's villages that faces the sea. The French expected to catch her napping. But a South Sea queen has not many things to pack up before retiring from her capital. Queen Mamea did not have an elaborate wardrobe, with Saratoga trunks, crown jewels, tea gowns, etc., to take with her. Her "palace" did not differ much from the houses of the other natives, except in size, and is not believed to have contained anything of great value.

All the Queen had to do was to blow her whistle, lift her skirts and seek the mountain paths to escape the vengeance of the French. Even her skirts did not greatly interfere with her progress, for the Queen dresses decolette, both above and below, and does not trouble herself much with an elaborate arrangement of skirts, petticoats, waists, etc.

Her principal garment is a gown made of white strips of bark. She dresses her hair in a fantastic manner, making it stand out in an imposing way all about her head. Her features are strong and her arms muscular.

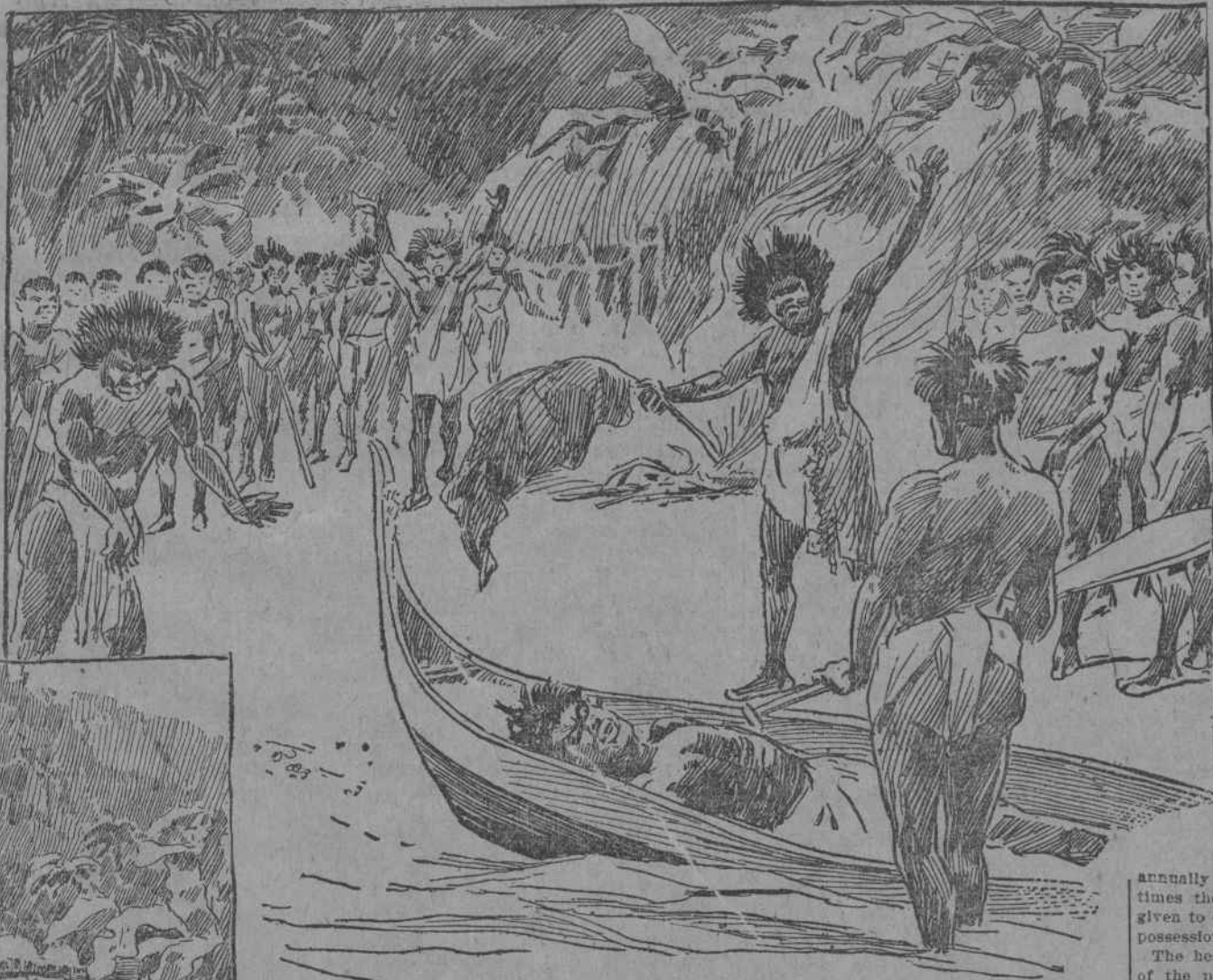
This Queen is a notorious fighter. She is not black, but very light complexioned, of a pale chocolate or saffron color. The natives of the Society Islands are among the lightest colored people in the Pacific.

The Society Islanders, who now for some mysterious cause express a desire to come into the United States, are among the most brutally ignorant idolatrous people on earth. Their favorite god, Tane, for whom an imposing temple has been erected of coral rock on the island of Huahine, one of Mamea's possessions, is modelled after



Queen Mamea

Return of the Idol.



The Human Sacrifice

and leaves, all grotesquely painted, and terminating in a tail over forty feet in length.

### POLYGAMOUS NATIVES.

One man's duty is to look after this god, and a singular thing about him is that he is the only man on the islands who is not allowed to get married. The other islanders marry early and often.

A man's social position there is proclaimed by the number of his wives, who are changed as often as suits the will of their master. These curious social customs have not been materially affected by the work of the missionaries.

The Society Islanders are now believed to have carried their god, Tane, with them up into the mountains, where they have followed Queen Mamea. Wherever is Tane they believe no harm can come to them.

Tane has a special house as well as a special keeper. This house is on top of tall posts, and the keeper sleeps there with him.

The idol is occasionally taken out for exercise. Any tree that is touched by the long tail of Tane becomes at once taut or sacred in the eyes of the islanders. Such trees must not be touched by profane hands.

The god-bearer is the only man allowed to lift the idol. He carries the great wooden image upon his back, and thus climbs into its lofty house.

The god is stuffed with feathers and is

annually given a new dress. At these times the old feathers are taken off and given to devotees, who hold them as sacred possessions.

The head tribesmen, under the guidance of the priests, then give the god a new dress and at once proceed to drink huge quantities of kava. No woman is permitted to be present at these feasts, and if one is caught within a specified distance of the wood where they occur she is at once killed, even her own brothers and male relatives being to the first to accuse her.

### A WELL-FED GOD.

Food of all kinds is presented to Tane, the idol of the Society Islanders. He gets the earliest fruits, the tenderest kids, the freshest fish, and indeed the best of everything, from which his keeper and the high priests are supposed to profit. The god has also an elegant canoe in case he should wish to take a trip upon the water.

Besides the idol gods of the Society Islanders, there are gods which are symbolized by living creatures, of which the shark is the chief, being worshipped on account of its destructive power. In one bay the sharks used to be regularly fed by the priests.

Sometimes a living man has been elected to the rank of a god by the Society Islanders and worshipped as such during his lifetime. This was done at Raiatea, where a former king, Tomanu by name, was reckoned among the gods. He was consulted as an oracle, and prayers and sacrifices were offered to him and he was treated as reverently as if he had been Tane himself. A singular thing about King Tomanu is that he afterward became a Christian and helped the missionaries on the islands.

But perhaps the most extraordinary individual on the Society Islands is the chief mourner at a funeral. Got up in his official dress, he presents a spectacle that is startlingly novel and grotesque.

No funeral of a chief can properly take place on the islands without his presence. The dress he wears is composed in the most ingenious manner of mother-of-pearl, shells, feathers, bark, cloth and similar materials.

This costume—several specimens of which are to be seen in museums of this country and Europe—is surmounted by an enormous head dress. This man, entirely encased in barbaric South Sea splendor, stands in the presence of the corpse of a chief, which is placed under cover on posts about twenty feet high.

### A CURIOUS FUNERAL CUSTOM.

Captain Cook relates how he saw the corpse of such a chief which had been exposed for several months without suffering an apparent change. This result is obtained by the Society Islanders removing the interior of a body and filling it with cloth soaked in coconut oil, the whole body then being repeatedly anointed with the same substance.

At the funerals of great chiefs human sacrifices are made. Fortunately for the victim, he knows nothing about his fate. He is suddenly struck to the ground by an assassin, who comes stealthily upon him.

The body is placed in a canoe half in and half out of the water. Young plantain trees are laid upon the sacrifice. Two bundles of cloth are also placed in the canoe, and a priest pulls some hair off the head of the dead man, while his left eye is taken out.

The onlookers at these times seem to have some grievances against the dead man and ask him questions. These ceremonies take place upon the beach.

The corpse of the sacrifice is then lifted from the canoe and carried to a wood, where it is buried with red feathers, pieces of cloth, carved shells and other barbarous offerings. The killing of a dog by twisting

his neck is likewise a part of this ceremony, and the skulls of previous human sacrifices are placed on exhibition.

The natives of these islands formerly had a sort of masonic brotherhood called the Areois. They worshipped the god Oro, had mysterious secrets, grips, passwords and emblems were much feared. They called their heaven the "Fragrant Paradise."

A curious thing about this religion is that its heaven was attained by the very opposite course preached by every other religion on earth. Instead of leading a life of self-denial, the Society Islanders who belonged to this organization believed that their only hope of salvation lay in a life of unbridled license. This convent belief was wiped out by the missionaries, and the Areois has gone to pieces.

One of their theories was to "ignore" death. This was attained by taking all sick people and burying them alive.

### THE SOCIETY ISLANDERS' THEFTS.

The Society Islanders of the present day are said to be the most accomplished thieves extant. They play a sort of bunco game upon unsuspecting sailors that has made their name synonymous all through the South Pacific with cunning trickery.

A sailor who comes ashore carrying a bundle in his hand is met by a native, who engages him in conversation. This native seeks to get the sailor to use both his hands for some purpose, thereby causing him to deposit his bundle on the beach.

Meanwhile another native, concealed under a bush, has fastened a fish hook to the end of a long pole. While the first native keeps the sailor engaged and his attention directed to the conversation, the second quietly slips the hook and makes off with it. When the loss is discovered the first native declares the sailor must have forgot his bundle, and, being naked himself, could not obviously have taken it.

Tattooing has gone out among these people, but they were formerly addicted to it. One singular custom which they retain, however, is that of making presents to strangers, in the expectation of getting more valuable presents in return. Their favorite dish is a roast pig.

The islanders declare they have not practiced cannibalism for several years. There are those, however, who say that in the mountain fastnesses of Raiatea, whither Queen Mamea and her followers have now retired, the eating of young children as a religious duty is still occasionally indulged in.

### CANNIBALISTIC HABITS.

The natives are so secretive and cunning that it is impossible to know what they actually do when they retire to the woods. They are more than suspected of maintaining an outward semblance of civilization and Christianity for the practical results that follow in intercourse with white men.

Old mariners of the South Pacific, who know these people well say they would not be surprised to learn that they have been secretly keeping up the practice of cannibalism to the present day. The natives do not deny that they were formerly cannibals and liked it.

Indeed, it is said they were so addicted to the eating of human flesh that they were only at first induced to give it up by being told that it was poisonous. They know very well at the present day that the practice is denounced by every civilized government in the world, and that this, with open human sacrifices, would soon get them into trouble. For this reason they have been claiming that these customs belonged to their barbarous ancestors, and are now extinct on the islands.

There is one striking and novel practice of these people which they predicate in common with those of the Hawaiian Islands, that is peculiar to the Pacific. That is surf-riding.

A tremendous surf beats upon the sandy beach of the Society Islands. Going far out beyond the breakers, the native sits or stands upon a board of stout wood, which supports him in the water.

He then waits for a big incoming wave, goes in front of it by a dexterous movement, and is carried onward to the beach with great speed. The wave rushes up the beach with the surf-riding, who is finally thrown on dry land, and goes back into the water to repeat the performance. It is an exhilarating and exciting spectacle to see a group of islanders practicing this surf-riding, which few Europeans have ever been able to master.

The men of the Society Islands think themselves a mark of beauty, and many of them are very fat. The women are the handsomest of the Polynesians. Such are the people who are now fighting with the French by making a masterly retreat on the subject with Secretary Olney, but the history of the Hawaiian negotiations is not encouraging. At any rate, it is believed she will hold out for a long while before the French can gain a substantial victory.



A Deserted Village

they sought by covert efforts to get her to give up her self-governing rights. It was known in Tahiti that the English had been manoeuvring with the purpose of annexing the islands if a favorable opportunity offered.

being cooked. The natives can sit on the hills and amuse themselves listening to the dull roar of the exploding French bomb-shell, while Nature does all the work.

Even the local whiskey of these people comes right up out of the ground and does

a huge comet which they saw in the heavens some generations back.

This comet scared the Society Islanders so that they immediately built their finest god in imitation of its shape. This god is a hideous image made of bark, feathers